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the Israelites themselves up to the time of the captivity. If opinion does differ somewhat as to the exact character it assumed, whether among the Canaanites or the Israelites, the fact remains that they both did worship the Deity or deities in such sanctuaries.

The Canaanites had their mountain groves or high-places with a stone pillar or pillars in each, a tree or sacred pole, an altar and carved images of their gods. This is borne out from the command of Moses to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 12; 3: "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place." Then in Deuteronomy 16; 21 a further command is given: "thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee. Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the Lord thy God hateth." The Israelites to begin with obeyed these commands, but worship in high places persisted. The prophet Samuel sacrificed there. The sanctuary at Gibeon, where Solomon once offered a thousand offerings, was called a high place. And the godly King Jehoshaphat, who turned not aside from what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet did not hinder the people from burning incense in the high places. The Israelites, however, in times of religious relapse so restored the Canaanitish manner of worship that Ashera, the Hebrew term for grove, came to represent as well the images and pillars introduced therein.

The Chiang make no representation, carved or hewn, of Deity but they publicly worship Him in a sacred grove high up on a mountain side or a mountain top. In the grove there is a sacrificial altar built of unhewn stones. Behind the altar grows a sacred tree which is an essential part of the sanctuary. Between the tree and the altar, or on the altar, stands a white stone of glistening purity, generally of quartz. Such a grove it will be noted is more elaborate in its contents than that recognised by the orthodox Israelites, yet has nothing of the corruption of that of the Canaanites. Essentially, this mode of worship, it will not be denied, suggests oneness of origin with both Canaanite and Hebrew, and brings down to us, does it not, a primitive form of Semitic worship in the dress of hoary antiquity? Doubtless the Canaanites did not originally have the corruptions that later characterised their groves and called forth the divine displeasure. Their cult, apparently, was a mixture of Semitic observance and Sumerian superstition.

The Chiang, more honourable than the Canaanites, have maintained their monotheism comparatively unsullied, and have given us an example of religious constancy to be found, apart from the Jews, in no other people.

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that they do. This should be enough. At the same time some of the ignorant among them may say that the White Stone is their "Pu-sa." Yet the same man tells you that he worships God and none other. In his mind there is no contradiction. The fault is yours if you fail to understand him. Certain words to him have a different meaning than to you. He speaks Chinese as a secondary language. Then he is talking down to you. He is pitying your ignorance and with his imperfect Chinese gives a wrong impression to the listener who has not wit enough to understand this. For instance, a tribesman may call his photograph his "pu-sa." But he knows enough that it is only a likeness. Though he uses this name for it that would not justify any one saying he worshipped himself, i.e. his own likeness, and is therefore, to be scientifically classed as an animist.

Sacred stones in primitive times were very comman. They were used in many different places in many different ways. In some instances they appear to have been worshipped. Few doubt that the Canaanites did. But no *true* Israelites did. The interest to us of the Chiang use of the White Stone is in the reflex light it throws on the use of memorial and covenant stones by the Hebrews. Jacob set up the stone that served as his pillow to mark the site where Jehovah appeared to him in promise and blessing. There he made his vow and from there he started on his journey with the assurance that the all-seeing eye of a gracious Providence watched over him for good. The stone was a mark, a memorial and a sign of his vow. For to him Heaven had opened in that place, and it was given him to see there a ladder of intercourse between earth and Heaven, very dreadful but very reassuring. We shall yet see that the Chiang hold almost identical views regarding their Stone which brings into fine relief those of the patriarchs.

Jacob in his dying blessing to Joseph spoke of the Mighty One of Jacob who caused his bow to abide in strength and made his arms strong when he was grieved and shot at by his persecutors. The God of his father "from whence came the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, should help him and bless him with the blessing of Heaven above and of the deep that croucheth beneath." Obviously in Jacob's mind the Shepherd of Israel and Stone at Israel were one. In his own case he speaks of this Shepherd and Stone as the Angel who redeemed him from all evil. It was he who spoke to him in Paran; He, who as a man, wrestled with him at the Jabbok and by whom he uttered his parting blessings on his sons. The Chiang do not explicitely speak of their Stone as Shepherd or Angel but they do speak of an Angel or God-sent man who acts for them in their approach to God at the altar where the Stone stands. The Chiang and Hebrew concepts are so closely allied that they may be called alike in everything but the terminology.

It was on, Sinai, the Mount of cloud and fire that Jehovah revealed himself to the Israelites and made known his Voice to

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171 778 them in The Ten Words. In the song of Moses, Jehovah is described as "Our Rock." The Rock followed he people in the wilderness and from the rock, water was made to gush forth to supply their needs. A Pillar of cloud guided them by day and a Pillar of fire by night. Joshua on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim respectively set up plastered pillar-monuments of blessing and cursing with the Law written on them. And when he made a covenant with the heads of the nation before his death, he took a great stone as a witness and set it up under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord, in the same fashion as is found in the Chiang country to day. Though the words of Hannah are unknown to the Chiang they yet fully subscribe to them in their thought content: that "there is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside Thee: neither is there any rock like unto our God." (1 Samuel 2; 2).

778 804 The Sacred Tree is another indispensable feature in the religion of the Chiang. All the trees in the grove are sacred and for this reason none may be cut, but The Tree behind the altar and adjacent to the White Stone is especially sacred. It is the one that gives locality and centralization to worship, even as it is the Whiteness of the Stone that indicates its mode and the altar that gives it reality. What further significance The Sacred Tree once had is not known. It would be easy to surmise that it was regarded as the Tree of Life, but the Chiang, as far as our knowledge goes, say nothing definite of this. They merely declare that it belongs to God. To it may be tied the sacrificial victim before being offered. And it is by way of the Sacred Tree that God comes when he descends from Heaven to meet His people in the Grove and by way of it he ascends again at the conclusion of the offering.

778 782 804 On the Chiang house tops we meet the Tree again. A straight branch is inserted behind the "O-pee" or White Stone. Here special perforated stone slabs hold it in place. Frequently two others, accompany it, one at either corner of the back parapet. In this way the flat roof takes the character of a private grove for the offering of family sacrifice. After the sacrifice these are left standing and a visitor by their appearance can always tell approximately what length of time has elapsed since the last offering was made.

A white outline of a Tree is not uncommanly drawn on the outside wall of a house. Drawn thus it is a symbol of blessing and prosperity. He who seeks God finds grace and worldly favour for he is the Author of all good.

000 Among the Chinese in Western China a symbolical tree with figures on either side was once in use. We have seen the portraiture on tomb bricks of the Han dynasty, on a sarcophagus and on ancient bronze mirrors. Where the idea originated or what it represents can only be surmised. To Westerners it suggest the Genesis story. Did the Chinese borrow it, one asks, from the Chiang?

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The altar is the third great requisite in Chiang worship. Often it is a platform of earth faced with natural shaped stone. Or it may consist of a slab of stone resting on other stones. But of whatever form, the stone or stones used must remain unhewn. No human shaping is permissible. Any cutting or polishing of the stones defiles them for use in the divine altar.

Occasionally a flat rock *in situ* is utilized. Such, of course, answers the natural requirement. The approach to Deity may not be of human design or of man's invention. The approach is divinely provided apart from the worshipper's help or contrivance.

At the base of Mount Sinai after the reception of the Ten Words, the Israelites had instructions conveyed to them of a corresponding nature. In sacrifice an altar of earth was to be raised, but if stone were used no tool should be lifted upon it, for that should defile it. Here is one of the many touches of intimacy in the practices of the two peoples that call for mutual consideration and comparison.

The Grove. The Tree, the White Stone and the Altar together constitute the Chiang sanctuary in the High Place. All are Sacred. One is not without the other. None of them is worshipped but all form essentials in the approach of man to God *and of God to man*. Account for the origin of these ideas as one may, we cannot deny their existence, or refuse to believe that the Chiang themselves give full credence to the tradition of their divine establishment.

A High Place is not chosen, as might be supposed, merely for its commanding elevation. It is rather chosen because they think of God as dwelling on high in the Heavens; and ascent to his altar gives natural expression of their desire to meet him. Up on the mountain side in the heart of a grove the world is shut out and the soul shut in with God. Nothing intervenes between man and his Creator. Here amid unspoilt surroundings, in the true Sanctuary of nature, the Father Spirit is pleased to meet with the humble suppliants of His grace.

Those who doubt this have to explain why the Chiang worship takes place at night. There is nothing then to be seen but the starry lights of Heaven. Absolute stillness reigns. Distraction is far removed. The whole thought is centred on the act of worship. Only a true seeker after God cares to make the climb. To him the darkness of the night is no deterrent, the risk of inclement weather no hindrance. The securing of the divine Presence is the great quest of his soul. Into his own moral darkness he wants the light of God to shine.

The Chiang have two names for God: "Abba Chee" or "The Father Spirit" and "Ma-Be Chee" or "Heavenly spirit". The first is the more common, and beautifully expressive. God is the Father of all personality or spirits of men. How fundamental this is to all true religious belief it only takes an instant to realise, and

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them. He is regarded as the Interpreter of all that takes place in the sacred grove and as The Agent who mediates between them and God.

At every sacrifice, accordingly, the priest has a sacred symbol of his presence, and this symbol is given a personal name. It is a roll of white paper in the form of an ancient book. Every priest guards his Roll with the most zealous care and regards it with the utmost veneration. No stranger is allowed to see it and no worshipper may even touch it. Neither will any priest tell an outsider of its existence. Without the presence of the Roll all sacrifice would be in vain. For it signifies the virtual Presence of the Heaven-Sent-One at the altar. Indeed he and the sacrifice are one.

[212] Originally the Chiang had their own scriptures, or writings. With the loss of the knowledge of letters, what was once a sacred roll of their law is now only a mere cylinder of white paper. But it preserves the form. It represents the reality. This explains their veneration for it. The roll denotes the spiritual nature of their offerings to the Father of spirits. They are offerings of righteousness consummated by the Heaven-Sent-One through his death for man's sin.

That he has to die for this purpose the priests take care to signify in a very unusual way: a small skull, or death's head, is inserted in the upper end of the sacred Roll. No one unitiated in the mysteries of the white religion would ever guess its meaning there. A second look has to be taken before indeed it is seen. The figure of death is embedded in the volume. This intimation is so plain that it is unmistakable. Even though it be surmised that the roll was originally without this tangible interpretation of its meaning, nevertheless the innovation reveals plainly the thought of the death of the Sin Bearer from Heaven as commonly held by all Chiang priests.

The writer has one of these rolls with the death's head in his possession. At the decease of an old priest who had it, a Christian Chiang secured it for us from his family.

The messianic message in the fortieth Psalm strikingly corresponds in thought to this age long aspiration of the Chiang, as evidenced in their Sacred Roll, and the mind of the man must be very dull that does not marvel at the closeness of the correspondence. "Sacrifice and offering", it says, thou hast no delight in; mine ears thou hast opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo I am come; in the Roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart". (R. V.)

The name of the divine Sin Bearer is also arresting: it is so like that of Jesus. The sound varies in different localities but the correspondence is close. In one place it is "Nee-Dsu", in a second "Je-Dsu," in a third "Rhe-Dsu" and so on. This can be put

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down to coincidence, of course, but its designation can hardly be that. It is known as Abba Malah. Abba means Father: here, the Father in Heaven. Malah is not known other than as a name. They do not seem to be able to define or explain the term, But the pronunciation is very precise. The "lah" is spoken with a definite click, so much so that it is virtually Malak, the Hebrew word for Angel. Have we not in this another strong indication of the Semitic origin of the Chiang religious beliefs?

In connection with this Sacred Roll and angel-Sin-Bearer or Redeemer the student of scripture inevitably recalls the many instances in the Old Testament of the mysterious angel-visitant appearing as God in human form to patriarchs, prophets and saints in times of stress and difficulty. By Isaiah he is called "the Angel of His Presence who saved them ":" in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them, and carried them all they days of old. (Isaiah,. 62; 9). In Malachi, 3; 1, "He is called the Lord whom ye seek, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in."

This delight of the Israelites for their Malak or Messenger of the covenant has a remarkable parallel in the fondness of the Chiang for their Abba Malah or Je-Dsu. They speak of Him in the possessive sense. The prefix of "ga-gee" goes with His name: "Ga-gee Je-Dsu" they say. The sentiment is that of the Christian hymn, "My Jesus I love thee, I know thou art mine."

Among Chiang Christians when the hymn "Jesus loves me" is sung the use of their own name "Je-Dsu" in place of the Chinese "Ye-Su" adds great zest to the singing. Every face then shines —every face is, as it were, a glistening white Stone.

At festival times the sacred roll is carried by the priest to the grove on a platter, where its base is embedded or planted in seed wheat. The emphasis is on the seed. The interpretation is not far to find when taken with the use to which this seed wheat is put. It is that death forms the prelude to life, a belief which the Chiang firmly hold. This will become plain as we proceed.

In some places the seed-wheat is carried separately to the grove, but at the grove the sacred roll is placed in it.

Where strict orthodoxy prevails there are three religious festivals in the year. The first occurs at their old New Year time, which falls on the first day of the tenth moon of the Chinese calendar. The second comes in the Summer and the third in the Autumn. But the dates vary according to the locality and even may be changed a little, as exigencies of weather and social conditions indicate.

In numerous places now only one religious festival is held in the year; in other places two. Uniformity has lapsed. Even in exact ritual procedure it is not found. One district has preserved customs and conceptions that another has let go or forgotten.

For private sacrifices there is naturally no set time. These

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291 ankles. The gown of a man is shorter behind, about the same length as in front. In the winter time there may be worn a long gown woven of dark brown wool, or a goatskin coat. In cold weather the hair of this coat is turned inside, and in rainy weather it is turned outside. This skin coat is sleeveless. Both men and women wear instead of hats turbans of white cotton cloth bought in the markets, those of the men and the women are folded differently.

[164] Poor people who have insufficient clothes suffer from the cold in winter time. Bad colds are frequent, and sometimes colds develop into pneumonia

The puttees are made of white wool. In the vicinity of Lung Ch'i Chai women wear red bands around the puttees about half way between the ankles and the knees. In the region of Ts'a To a dark band is worn.

The best linen gowns of the men and the women have borders of blue cloth around the neck and down to the waist on which flowers are embroidered in white.

Woven belts are worn. Generally these are of white hemp cloth, but near Wen Ch'uan and Li Fan the woven belts are varicolored and ornamented with beautiful geometric patterns The designs for [171] these belts have apparently been borrowed from the Jia Rung and the Wa Ssu, for in other parts of the Ch'iang region they occur rarely if at all, and they are very common among the Jia Rung and the Wa Ssu.

7. Tools, Implements and Utensils.

412 Most of the tools and implements closely resemble those of the Chinese. The hoe is wide flat, and thick, and its handle is about four feet long. A very useful implement is the thick iron sickle which serves to cut both wood and grass. Their axes are heavier and clumsier than foreign axes. As has been stated before, the loom consists of several pieces of wood, and the spindle is simply a stick of wood around which the thread or yarn has been wound.

The plow differs from that of the Chinese. The handle is shorter so that the plowman stoops over and pushes down when he plows, lifting the plow out of the ground when he turns around. The long beam is tied to the yoke, which is little more than a pole and is tied to the shoulders of two cows or oxen. The plowman sings

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517 men sit and smoke and gossip, and the women spin yarn of hemp thread, make shoes or embroidery, or sew clothing.

527 During the first moon families invite friends and relatives
[525] to a feast where they eat, smoke, talk, and drink wine. There is very little gambling. At this time people may amuse themselves by "playing lion," when two men covered by an imitation lion's skin dance about and fight with a man who always conquers the lion.

517 While working in the fields, tending their flocks, gathering wood or working in their homes, men and women talk and sing songs. When bringing home loads of wood or corn or some other produce they
[562] may stop at a convenient resting-place and chat. There is considerable freedom between the sexes--that is, they visit and talk freely together, with comparatively little sexual irregularity.

535 At Chiu Tzu T'un in 1933 the writer witnessed a dance by
171 twelve women and six men. The women were lined up on the right and the men on the left. First the men would sing a line of a song, dancing rhythmically, and waving their arms from side to side. Occasionally there was a slight, quick lowering of the body. There were graceful steps in unison, a swaying of the body, and a stamping of the feet While singing each line each person turned around com-
[415] pletely one time. It was both interesting and graceful. There was a jar of wine from which the performers drank through small bamboo tubes. As the wine became low, fresh water was poured into the jar. The dance was led by a female relative of the local ruler. Since she was a Jia Rung, and the Jia Rung are very near, since the dance is lacking in other parts of the Ch'iang region, and since it very closely resembles the Jia Rung dance, it seems safe to assume that this dance was borrowed from the Jia Rung.

2. Engagements.

584 Sometimes through singing "Mountain songs" or otherwise a young man and a young women become attached to each other and desire to get married In that case they must request their parents to appoint middle men to make the necessary arrangements, and the consent of the two families must be obtained

In Ch'iang engagements middle men are always necessary. Marriage is not an individual, but a family affair. Generally the young people are not given a choice, but the choice is made for them. A

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walking-sticks made, and every Ch'iang to which the writer has shown the picture has stated that he has seen nothing like it in the Ch'iang region. Snakes on canes used by the priests are very rare among the Ch'iang and are much more crudely carved. When a snake does occur it is with the idea that the snake makes the stick more efficient in exorcising demons.

5. The Ch'iang tradition is that the migration to western Szechwan took one year and several months, not three years and six months as is affirmed on page 19 of "The First Missionaries to China." Even Kou P'in-shan stated to the writer that it was one year and several months.

6. The flat roofed houses, the high watch-towers, the stone buildings, the sacred white stones and many other culture traits are common among tribespeople all over the highlands of western Szechwan, Si K'ang and eastern Tibet, and may have been acquired by the Ch'iang after they arrived in Szechwan. The sky god is very similar to the god T'ien worshipped by the Chous who were the allies of the Ch'iang in B. C. 1121.

Let us assume for a moment that the Ch'iang are Hebrews. How amazing it is that neither the Ch'iang nor the Chinese knew anything about it, and that the Ch'iang have no taboo against eating pork.

VI. *Conclusion.*

This article is a preliminary statement that needs criticism, correction, and amplification. They will be welcomed by the writer, as well as additional information.

The Ch'iang people are changing rapidly. There are villages in which it is almost impossible to find any person that can speak the Ch'iang language and who understands their customs. The great variation in language and mores in different localities, and the natural reticence of the people make it extremely difficult to understand and to interpret accurately the life and ideals of these people.

They came to this country many centuries ago, apparently from the northeast, and settled in this mountainous, semi-arid land where it has been difficult to wrest a livelihood from nature, and where powerful enemies have made war on them. Their neighbors, excepting the Chinese, are in the Tibetan culture area, and through them numerous culture traits have penetrated into the Ch'iang region. They have had constant cultural contacts with the Chinese through